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Message Text

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 H-02 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 DOE-11
SOE-02 ACDA-12 OMB-01 /098 W
----------123267 060721Z /15
R 060537Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2594
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
CNO
SECNAV WASHDC
CINCPAC
CINCPACFLT
COMSUBPAC PEARL HARBOR
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
AMCONSUL BRISBANE
AMCONSUL MELBOURNE
AMCONSUL PERTH
AMCONSUL SYDNEY

UNCLAS CANBERRA 1661

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MILI, AS
SUBJ: VISIT OF USS QUEENFISH TO MELBOURNE

1. USS QUEENFISH SAILED INTO MELBOURNE ON SUNDAY, MARCH 5 TO A RECEPTION WHICH WAS WARM AND FRIENDLY, AND IN WHICH PROTESTERS WERE BUT A MINOR NUISANCE.

2. APPROXIMATELY 50 SMALL BOATS ACCOMPANIED THE QUEENFISH FOR PORTIONS OF ITS JOURNEY UP THE YARRA ESTUARY, OF WHOM NO MORE THAN HALF A DOZEN HAS TO BE SHOOED AWAY BY ESCORTING POLICE/RAN BOATS FOR COMING TOO CLOSE AND THUS POSING A HAZARD TO THE QUEENFISH.

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3. AS THE QUEENFISH PULLED INTO ITS DOCK, A CROWD VARIOUSLY ESTIMATED AS BETWEEN 1,000 TO 2,000 ONLOOKERS, SIGHTSEERS, AND WELL-WISHERS LINED THE SHORE. OF THESE, ONLY ABOUT 150 WERE "PROTESTERS", WITH PLACARDS, SIGNS AND BANNERS.

4. DOCKING WAS WITHOUT INCIDENT, AS WAS BOARDING BY THE AMBASSADOR AND CONGEN POPPLE. THERE WERE NO VIOLENT

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INCIDENTS, ALTHOUGH POLICE HAD TO WRESTLE A FEW DEMONSTRATORS OUT OF THE WAY TO CLEAR THE PATH FOR THE AMBASSADOR'S

DEPARTURE. WE GATHER FROM SHIP'S EXECUTIVE OFFICER THAT CREW MEMBERS FROM THE QUEENFISH ENCOUNTERED NO DIFFICULTY ENTERING AND LEAVING THE SHIP, AND BY MONDAY MORNING (MARCH 6) THERE WERE NO RPT NO DEMONSTRATORS OR PROTESTERS LEFT AT THE WHARF.

5. VISIT OF THE QUEENFISH RECEIVED VERY GOOD COVERAGE IN ALL MAJOR NATIONAL NEWSPAPERS, ACCOMPANIED BY PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SUBMARINE ITSELF, ITS SKIPPER, CMDR. DAUGHTERS, AND CREW.

6. BARRING ANY UNEXPECTED NEW DEVELOPMENT, EMBASSY CONCLUDES THAT THIS VISIT SETS A PRECEDENT FOR SSNS, AND THAT INSOFAR AS THE VISIT OF NPWS IS CONCERNED, THE TIDE HAS TURNED AND AUSTRALIA HAS COME OF AGE. CONGEN MELBOURNE WILL BE PREPARING A SUMMARY OF THE VISIT AFTER THE QUEENFISH SAILS ON FRIDAY, MARCH 10.
ALSTON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, NAVAL SHIPS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CANBER01661
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780100-0420
Format: TEL
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803104/aaaadkdj.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f73af8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION PM
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3110838
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISIT OF USS QUEENFISH TO MELBOURNE
TAGS: MILI, AS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f73af8b7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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